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## The Dirt on Spinach

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*Utah State University*

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USU Student Organic Farm

# THE GARDEN BEAT

community supported agriculture

June 17 & 20, 2013

Vol. 4, Issue 6



## IN THE BOX

**Spinach**  
**dwarf kale**

red giant mustard greens

**arugula**

daikon radishes

**lettuce**

green onions

**strawberries**

## The Dirt on Spinach

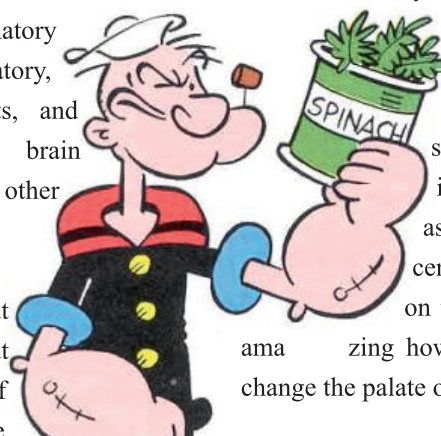
Spinach is that quintessential health food that seems to be the very spokes-plant for healthy eating. Jam packed with phytonutrients, antioxidants, and trace minerals, poor spinach has somehow become the target for food scares and overblown media hype. In many cases, the exaggerations outweigh any news of spinach's fantastic benefits: it possesses anti-inflammatory properties, bone, circulatory, and eye health benefits, and slows age-related brain degeneration along with other dark greens.

You may have heard about being careful about consuming too much of this deep green veggie,

though in almost all cases these fears are overblown. The most cited caution stems around the high levels of oxalic acid in spinach, which is a very common substance that gives a sour bite to many familiar fruits and veggies. Our bodies produce some of this acid on their own, too. You'd have to consume very large portions of spinach every day for a very long time to feel any effects. In reality, the only people that need to be careful around spinach are those with rare health conditions that require watching their oxalate consumption. So don't write

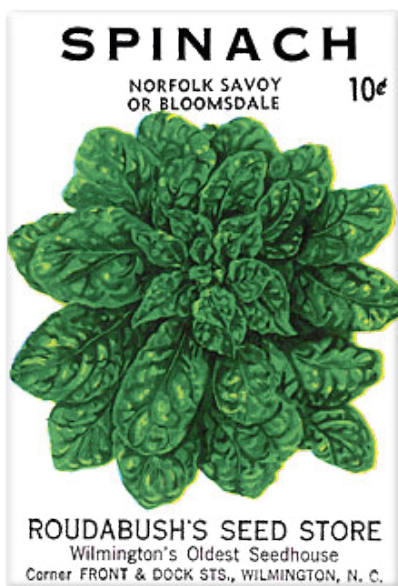
this veggie out! There's far more to lose than there is to gain when spinach is off the menu!

Popeye would agree. The incredible strength he gained from downing a can of precooked spinach (eww) influenced kids to maybe, just maybe, choke down some of that slimy green stuff that made the wiry sailor beat the tar out of muscly Bluto. He was such a huge success that spinach growers of the 1930's widely credit Popeye with saving the spinach industry. Before that time, as recently as the turn of the century, spinach was rarely on the American plate. Pretty amazing how a cartoon character can change the palate of an entire country!



Now we can enjoy it as more than just a can full of brownish-green hash. Fresh spinach really is a cut above that, and can be a real delight in salads and sandwiches, or prepared in Italian stuffed pastas or in an Indian yogurt dip (saag) and served with naan bread. Whatever you prefer to do with it, please remember that the many wonderful nutrients are lost in only a matter of days! Enjoy!

*Andrew Croft*



## Classic Green Monster (aka smoothie)

**Yield:** 1 serving/2 cups

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup almond milk, or milk of choice
- 1 ripe banana, preferably peeled + frozen
- 2 handfuls organic spinach or 1 handful kale
- 1 tbsp chia seeds OR 1 tbsp ground flax (I like to use both :)
- 1 tsp nut butter, optional

-1-3 ice cubes

-protein powder of choice, optional

**Directions:** Starting with the liquid, add in 1 cup of milk of your choice. Now add in the chia or flax and nut butter. Next, add in the spinach followed by the banana on top. Blend until smooth. Add in your ice cubes and blend some more. Serves about 1-2 cups.





What you might see in  
your next box

**Lettuce**  
**Tatsoi**  
**Pakchoi**  
**Cilantro**  
**Swiss Chard**  
**Mizuna Mustard Greens**  
**Dill**

### Announcements

#### Herbs in the Garden

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| -Thyme         | -Lemon balm    |
| -Sage          | -Lavender      |
| -Garlic chives | -Greek oregano |
| -Chamomile     | -Chives        |
| -Catmint       | -Hyssop        |
| -Summer savory |                |

Come get herbs anytime for your teas and recipes!

#### Volunteer hours:

**Tuesday**, 9 am to 12 pm, (planting, weeding, mulching, watering and fixing things)

**Thursday**, 9 am to 1 pm, (harvesting produce for the CSA members)

**Friday**, 9 am to 12 pm, (like Tuesday, regular farm duties)

#### A tip for chard:

Chard is fabulous in soups because it maintains its texture a lot better than spinach when cooked. Always use the stems, either separately or with the leaves. They are full of flavor and great in stir-fries.

#### Missed pickup policy:

If you forget to pickup your share for the week at your scheduled time, we are so sorry but you will have to forfeit the share for the week. If you let us know a week in advance that you will be gone, we can definitely work something out so you don't miss a share. Also, you can have a friend, neighbor, or relative come pick up your share for you if you will be gone. They just need to come at your scheduled pickup time and let us know who they are picking up for.

## On the Farm News

This Farm is not what I had expected it to be. As a new student to USU, I am exploring my interests. I have to admit that my interests are what create my dreams. My dreams began as babies and finally open in full bloom as they are truly being realized through my experiences. Becoming an intern on the USU Student Organic Farm I have been fortunate to connect with all of you. The basis of my appreciation for this farm was organic farming but it has grown to include you.

This week the interns here at the farm had the privilege to connect with interns from lots of other projects within the Utah Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps for a combined service project at Red Butte Gardens. I was inspired as

I met other people pursuing their dreams in a similar way to myself. It was great to have this opportunity to listen to their opinions, share in their knowledge, and feel their energy. We set goals together and made plans for our near and distant futures. We talked about our experiences, our weaknesses and identified what a breakthrough would be for us as we serve in AmeriCorps. Through connecting with others we were able to better ourselves and come away with a new sense of direction. We do this together on our farm and it is thanks to your support. So please find us here and connect with us. After all you are the important part which makes this community supported program work.

*Eric Manrique*

To learn how to grow your own spinach visit USU extension:

***Spinach in the Garden***



*We transplanted basil right next to the tomatoes. They are good friends.*

